

Activity 6

The Commuter Challenge

Goals:

- Motivate sustainable action on campus
- Introduce sustainability concepts using a fun, interactive approach

Outcomes:

- Improved sustainable living and reduced ecological impacts
- An increased sense of community and the creation of meaningful relationships

Background: The commuter challenge is a national program that encourages people to walk, cycle, carpool or take public transit to their destination. The program is based on a friendly competition between workplaces and communities across Canada to see which has the highest percentage participation rates during the week. By registering participation online, Canadians are able to see the results of their healthier commutes with respect to greenhouse gas reductions calculated by taking into account kilometres not traveled and leaving your car at home. (Government of Canada, 2008)

Suggested Time: One week or longer

Place: Campus, Office or home

Materials:

- Promotional materials
- Non-car transportation resources
- Prizes to motivate participants

NOTES:

STEP 1 • Check www.commuterchallenge.ca to find the annual commuter challenge dates, or choose your own dates to hold a similar challenge

STEP 2 • Register for the challenge.

STEP 3 • Promote and recruit coworkers, family and friends.
• Educate the public

Put up eco-friendly signage or bulletins in a highly trafficked area to raise awareness about unsustainable transportation.

STEP 4 • Motivate your team to participate.

**Idea: Have a breakfast for green commuters.*

STEP 5 • Summarize and present results.

**Idea: Consider holding a "Breakfast for Green Commuters" (Government of Canada, 2008). This is an event which rewards green commuters with a free snack and coffee while providing an inspirational social atmosphere as well as an opportunity to encourage new participants. For details, check out <http://www.cleanairday.com/html/Activities.php#breakfast>.*

Follow up: any?

- Hold a social event such as a lunch and learn (see Activities: Learning Sessions) to commend those who participated and promote continued sustainable transport.